



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**MAYOR EMANUEL, CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNOUNCE NEW EFFORTS TO PROTECT SOUTHEAST SIDE RESIDENTS FROM AIR POLLUTION**

*City holds industrial facilities accountable for manganese dust, increases clean air protections for residents*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) today announced new efforts to protect Southeast Side communities from air pollution created by industrial facilities. CDPH is continuing its regulatory actions with two major bulk material handling facilities, S.H. Bell Company and Watco Transloading, to ensure strict control and monitoring measures so that manganese dust does not leave their facilities and affect the health of nearby residential neighborhoods.

"Today's actions are emblematic of our ongoing commitment to protect the health of every resident in every neighborhood," said Mayor Emanuel. "While President Trump and EPA Administrator Pruitt cut funding and appoint regional administrators with track records of environmental ambivalence, Chicago continues to step up – ensuring every company complies with our tough rules and regulations that protect Chicago's children and families."

As a result of community feedback and after numerous revisions of the proposal, CDPH has accepted a strict, robust, and protective revised "fugitive dust plan" to increase S.H. Bell's manganese dust control measures and more stringently protect the air quality for residents living near their Southeast Side facility. In the revised plan S.H. Bell has agreed to:

- No longer store manganese outdoors
- Suspend loading and unloading of manganese during periods of high winds
- Take significant abatement measures to ensure manganese dust does not leave the facility
- Construct new on-site equipment to minimize the amount of dust that will leave the facility
- Continue previously agreed to air monitoring

Throughout the regulatory process, CDPH ensured that immediate steps were taken by S.H. Bell as it worked on its long-term plan, including increased inspections, expanded air monitor placement and

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

stricter dust collection. Monitoring data indicates that since the implementation of these immediate measures, average monthly manganese levels have declined. CDPH will continue to monitor the facility to ensure continued compliance with city rules.

In addition to holding S.H. Bell accountable, CDPH denied a request by Watco for special exemptions from air monitoring requirements in the City's Bulk Material Regulations. Previously operated by Kinder Morgan, who was also denied a variance from CDPH earlier this year, Watco was denied the request in order to best protect the neighborhood's air quality and due to strong indications that fugitive manganese-containing dust left the Watco property on a number of occasions. Watco, like all bulk materials producers in the city, will be required to install fence line monitors to measure dust emissions and take additional measures as needed to ensure dust can not escape.

"Every resident in every neighborhood has the right to breathe clean air and live in a clean, healthy environment," said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. "We expect all companies to comply with our strict environmental standards and are prepared to take all appropriate steps necessary to protect our residents and communities."

Earlier this year the U.S. EPA reported indicators of high manganese levels at both S.H. Bell and Watco. Without waiting for the federal administration to hold these companies accountable, CDPH commissioned its own study to investigate all companies in Chicago that could use manganese and the impact to residents' health in the area, including Southeast Side facilities that store and process bulk amounts of industrial raw materials. The study, conducted by a retained consultant, included modeling of particulate matter, as well as soil and air sampling near homes in the area to assess potential health risks to residents.

"The message is loud and clear: it is unacceptable for companies to do business in Chicago that negatively affects health of residents," said Alderman Susan Garza. "I thank Mayor Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Public Health for taking swift action and bettering the air quality on the Southeast Side for generations to come."

Manganese is a naturally occurring element that is used in steel production. While very small amounts can be found in soil, coal and other resources throughout the U.S., direct, ongoing inhalation of large amounts of manganese can be hazardous.

Chicago's current bulk material regulations— for storage and handling—are among the strongest in the nation. Presently, companies that manage bulk materials are required to have fugitive dust plans, which outline dust control measures, such as sprinklers and enclosures, as well as air monitors to ensure the measures are working.

Today's developments build upon the Mayor's previous efforts to protect residents and the environment from harmful pollutants. In April 2014, the City Council of Chicago passed an ordinance to ban new petcoke, coke and coal facilities and prohibit the expansion of existing facilities.

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